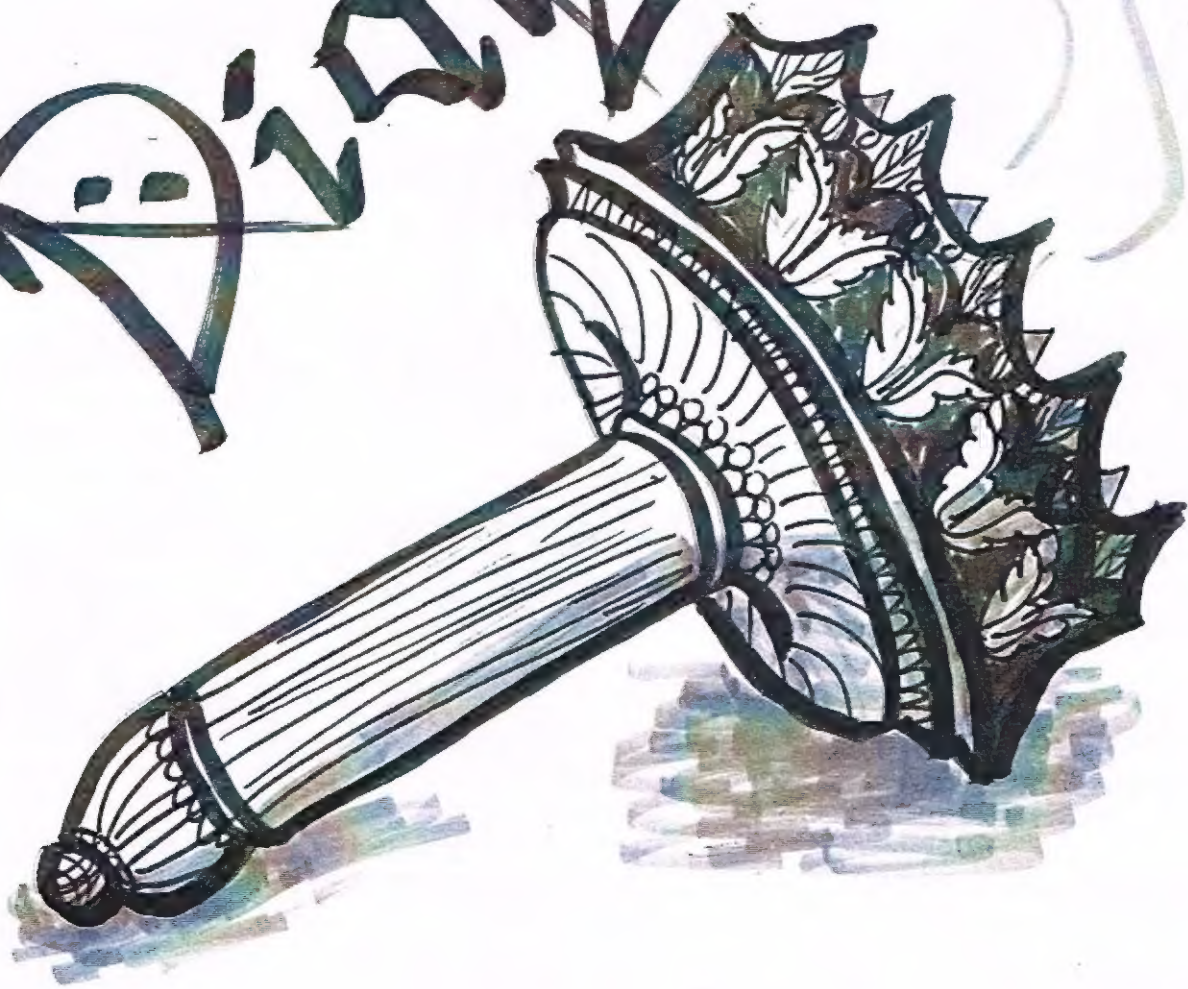


# THE COAST ZEPHYRUS



[a submission-based political magazine]  
[edition #5 // 7/15/25]



# Cover Image

by Marlow Kurtz

We can re-light  
the torch of

liberty. If we dedicate our-  
selves to integrity, wisdom,  
and excellence, that flame  
will reignite all on its

own. Keep the faith.

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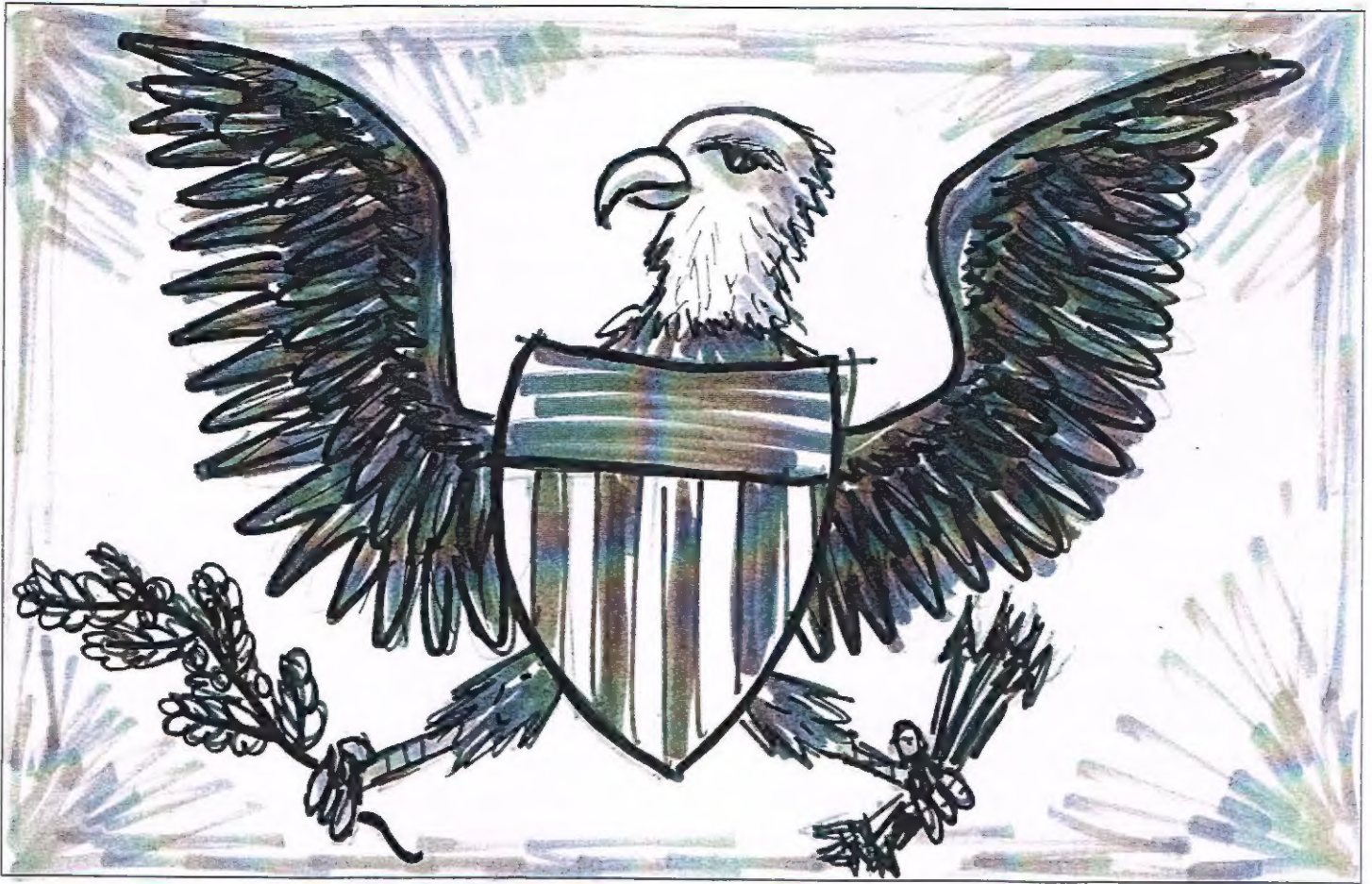
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## Patriotism

Joe Sebrelli

I suspect many of my neighbors and peers in the Democratic Party also feel discomfort with patriotism, given our country's history of colonialism and its ongoing violence against non-white communities. That discomfort is understandable. For anyone with a working conscience, it resonates deeply. But in rejecting all forms of patriotic expression, have we lost something valuable—something that once bound us to a collective ideal?

The Pledge ends with the words “with liberty and justice for all.” They’re easy to say. They roll off the tongue, often recited quickly as we wait for the first pitch at a baseball game. But pause for a moment—really pause—and say them slowly: “with liberty and justice for all.” There’s something inherently powerful, even sacred, in that promise. It speaks to a vision of a country striving to be just, fair, and for everyone.

And when I watch MAGA rallies, the current Republican Party, and other segments of our country embrace a different vision—one that excludes rather than includes—I want those words to catch in their throats. The so-called “Big Beautiful Bill” isn’t about liberty; it’s about enriching the few and subjugating the many—especially those considered “too brown.” What could be more perverse than an ICE or MAGA agent reciting “liberty and justice for all” before trampling people with horses?

Our nation is under tremendous strain. At times, it feels as though we’re living under foreign occupation—and in a sense, we are. The domination we’re experiencing is driven by a small group of oligarchs clinging to old, tired ideas. Their vision of America is not only un-American—it’s anti-American.

So how do we resist, when the symbols of our country have been so thoroughly tainted? I’m not sure. Maybe we need a new flag—one that represents a truer version of America. Or maybe we hold on to Old Glory, not as a symbol of blind pride, but as a call to action. A reminder that our union is not yet perfect, but that perfection remains our goal. A country where, because its citizens care deeply, liberty and justice really can be for all.





### Counterculture: Who's the Establishment Now?

by Marlow Kurtz

In the 1960s and 70s, the West underwent an ideological and cultural upheaval against the establishment. Championed by young people, artists, and intellectuals, the counterculture movement stood up to the ideological demons of senseless war, bigotry, and conformity, and these coordinated social efforts paved the way for expansions of the rights of people of color, women, and queer identities. Today, the counterculture's ideals represent a much more widely accepted swath of American values. In essence, counterculture has become culture, and new ideological failures have arisen from this New Establishment.

MAGA and other extremists are relying on the New Establishment's lack of societal standards—downstream of a good faith emphasis on personal authenticity over societal expectations—to run rampant with disinformation and emotivist rhetoric. In the 60s, it was a novel idea to attack Western values and to shake the foundations of our political institutions, but these impulses have become the norm. The New Establishment did not stop after achieving its goals, and is now anti-American and anti-institutional; MAGA is both attacking these ideas and using them to gain electoral and political power. The Far Leftists are also functioning within the New Establishment: their continued anti-American and anti-institutional rhetoric is weakening the political power of the whole left wing, enabling the spread of MAGA ideology, and furthering the polarization of American politics.

The threat of Far Left Extremists cannot be underestimated. The extreme wing of the left is an enemy to which everyday liberals are far less

attuned, making it easy for radicals to move and speak in our circles. The easiest way to tell the difference between a Liberal and a Far Leftist is the way in which they seek to achieve their goals. While Liberals seek to affect change by enacting policies through existing legal and social infrastructure, Far Leftists seek to use society as a weapon *against* the existing infrastructure. In essence, they are the continuation of the original countercultural belief that our political institutions are part of an oppressive establishment. This leads them to refuse to cooperate within it. Where Liberals seek to enact policies, Far Leftists seek social upheaval, revolution, and the disintegration of the Democratic values that are core to our nation. The Far Left employs many of the same rhetorical tactics as MAGA, but does not even seek to build a coalition of effective electoral power. Both extremist factions demonstrate a deep anti-American urge, politics based in identity, and rhetoric designed to emotionally manipulate—but only one is a wolf in liberal clothing.

We can easily recognize MAGA's anti-Americanism, but the Far Left's anti-Americanism is less obvious. It surfaces most often as oversimplified emotional reactions to morally complicated issues. You can identify them by their calls for the abolishment of the police, their wholesale rejection of capitalistic economic structures, and their full-throated sympathy for terrorists-- all of which are childish, disinforming, extremist stances without any consideration for the facts of the underlying issues. Much like MAGA, the Far Left will turn violently on anyone who does not toe their idealist line.

These extremists abuse the Democrats' political infrastructure to amplify their emotivist messages, but they don't vote for our candidates or support sane policies. The faction of Far Left Extremism that refused to vote for Kamala Harris because they did not think she was hard enough on Netanyahu are *directly responsible for the installation of the Trump administration*. When pressed on the issue of their refusal to vote, many Far Leftists argue that Harris would not have been any better for Gaza than Donald J. Trump. Far Leftists are not our political allies; they are our political enemies. Until we, the broader Democratic voter base, demonstrate contempt for these reductive ideas, our party leadership has their hands tied. They cannot defy the extremists unless they know we want them to do so.



It is easy to see that MAGA wants to throw out the institutions that protect our rights and keep our citizens safe, but the Far Left is not so different. Far Leftists believe that our political institutions have failed to protect our freedoms; they view our political institutions as members of "the establishment" against which the original countercultural urge fought. Far Leftists believe that our legal infrastructure is nothing more than a series of cogs in a machine of pure oppression. Democratic politics are so tainted with deference to these extremists because we, the rank and file liberals, are so sensitive to the manipulative tactics of Far Leftist rhetoric. They say they are fighting against oppression, and we are naturally interested in helping fight oppression. They are not, however, interested in improving our institutions to better serve anyone. Both MAGA and the Far Left are hell-bent on simply tearing our institutions to pieces in order to reshape the nation according to their extremist ideologies.

These extremist factions also share a similar way of speaking: simply make it impossible for anyone to have a reasonable disagreement (a tendency that is fueled by algorithmic reinforcement of each social media user's existing biases). Each time a Far Leftist makes a political claim, they declare their position to be the moral high ground and characterize any form of nuanced discussion as morally bankrupt. They are not informed on the issues they champion. When pressed for further information on their stances, they either change the subject to something unrelated or they lash out, declaring that anyone who dares to ask questions is too stupid or immoral to understand something so obvious. Far Leftists over-simplify every issue down to a relationship between an oppressor and the oppressed in order that they can imagine themselves as morally superior advocates for at-risk populations, but their ideas about how to stop oppression don't address reality or deal with facts. This is why the Far Leftists are so difficult to recognize. On the left, Liberals are deeply concerned with protecting the oppressed from their oppressors; it is an integral part of left-leaning politics. Our good faith makes us susceptible to this extremist rhetoric. We must begin to resist them or we will end up just like the GOP: disenfranchised of our political power.

Don't forget: there used to be actual conservatives in power. Now, real conservatives have all been completely ousted from the American

government by the MAGA movement. In the same way that the GOP failed to hear their extremist wing for what they truly were, we are failing to hear our own. They will throw us out of power if we do not begin dealing with them like the threats they are. What we need is a coalition of liberals who are willing to set aside differences in order to oppose the autocrats in power.

The reality of our position is that we must reject the rhetoric of our extreme wing while mirroring their successful past operations. The counterculture movement focused heavily on using social upheaval to fight back against a political system they believed was rigged against them. We are now dealing with a system that is actively being rigged against anyone outside of the MAGA movement. We must become a social movement that challenges the status quo—the New Establishment of traitorism, stupidity, and cry-bullying—and we must fight back with patriotism, information, and dialogue.

The only counterculture movement left is to believe that our country is worth saving, and to love it enough to do the hard work it takes to fucking save it.

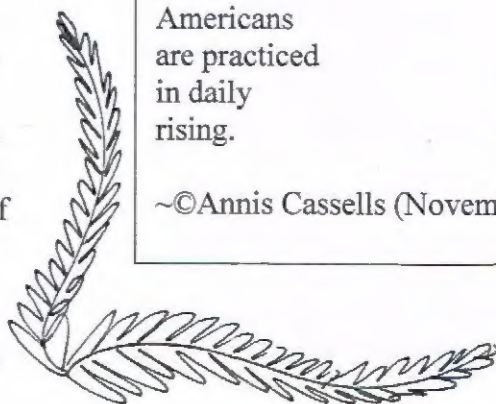
### The Wave

The red wave  
covered,  
bloodied  
the landscape,  
stunted  
the hope  
of prospects  
within reach  
after 250 years  
of striving.

\*

But we  
Americans  
are practiced  
in daily  
rising.

~©Annis Cassells (November 7, 2024)





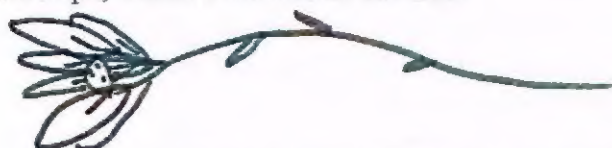
# Letters

from

# Miss Lucy



if you are struggling with anxiety. I do see reasons for hope, which I will list at the end.



Friends, we have arrived at Calamity in the Land of the Free. The last stop. The hostile government takeover is complete. There will now be a rapid scheduled disassembly of our government services, research orgs, and regulatory agencies. Enshittification has reached the final level, and things may deteriorate quickly, especially in red states and especially for the working class, the poor, the disabled, the elderly, and the marginalized. The destruction won't be restricted to the US, either. It sucks but that is the situation we find ourselves in.

I have been watching my society collapse for a long time and I struggle to get super excited and hopeful for the More and Better Voting/Pressure Our Electeds/Rallies and Posters plan. I will definitely work as hard as I can toward More and Better Voting et al, and I hope it works. I really do. I think it could work, especially since we only need to peel off 10-15% from the casual right. I salute those taking the lead on that project. But people have been employing those tactics for at least thirty years of oncoming fascism, and have made very little progress that way. In fact, it's gotten *considerably* worse over time. The right-wing misinformation system is like a deranged godzilla, rampaging through the media ecosystem, stomping everything it sees, and shitting out inferior replacements. Half the country believes some truly astounding bullshit; they're ready to crown a king. It's very hard to overcome. We've been trying for decades.

I see how close we are getting to the cliff's edge. And so I feel that we must plan for a different outcome, as well. I am not sure that rebooting democracy will be enough to right the ship. I am sorry to be a bummer, y'all. Skip the next paragraph

Climate change is here, like REALLY here, and also just getting started. Robber barons have taken over and are hoovering up resources as fast as they can. Deaths of despair are increasing: addiction, suicide, interpersonal violence. The degradation of the social fabric is throwing sand in the gears of society, which weren't running that smoothly anyway. Our mental healthcare system is overwhelmed and in danger. Education is in a downward spiral (I am particularly alarmed about this, people outside of education/psych have no idea.) We've got a disastrous situation in health care, a veritable five-alarm fire, especially for veterans and the elderly. The queer community is being threatened, and trans folks are slated to be "eliminated," whatever that may mean, I fear the worst. Rural communities and poor urban neighborhoods are suffering. There is a completely unacceptable and immoral rate of homelessness. Insane technocrats have MAJOR influence, especially Curtis Yarvin and his ilk. Our government is wholly owned and operated by large corporations and repressive religious nuts. A bunch of tech bros rummaged around in all our government records, they almost certainly copied a lot of data and maybe installed back doors for later use. A state-surveillance company called Palantir, run by noted eugenicist Peter Thiel, is compiling dossiers on every American, to what end, I can only imagine. Dictators are in power around the world. Wars are worsening, including ongoing genocide. Police brutality has only gotten worse, and now includes the new ICE, composed of anonymous people in taticool militia gear snatching brown people off the streets, throwing them into unmarked vehicles without valid license plates, then shipping them to some random place. With the budget for ICE exploding above even that of the US Marine Corps, it appears Trump is setting up his own private standing army. I could go on but I'm sure you get my drift. If I missed the thing you are most concerned about I apologize. It's hard to keep up sometimes.

So what do we do? What CAN we do? We can *prepare*. We can get ready for potentially catastrophic situations by becoming more self-



reliant, so when the shit hits the fan, we have a plan in place. This can start small. Have emergency supplies on hand, like food, clean water, pet food, first aid, medications, and so forth. What if cell service or the internet go down? We'll need an alternate communication system, such as ham radio. Electrical grid goes down? Solar generators, alternate heat sources, ways to cook food. Water filters just in case.

Stepping out a level, if you are able, plant a garden. Learn to hunt if you are so inclined. Learn to preserve food. Sewing, weaving, primitive skills, carpentry, welding, first aid, self defense, community defense, making things, repair, there are a ton of skills you can pick up. Not to mention, these things are FUN. We've evolved to do them.

You may be thinking, come on we're not going to need all that anytime soon. And that's true. It might not even get to that in my lifetime. But what about the kids? WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS, Y'ALL?? Do you think kiddos who are six years old today are going to have the society we have now as adults? Because I do not. I think this society is going to be very different in 30 years, and our kids are going to need skills that most people aren't teaching them. Low-tech skills. *Survival* skills. I would rather have skills I don't need, than need a skill I don't have. We have time to learn, I think. At least that's my best assessment at this time.

The most important thing, moving forward, is community. Not the global idea of community; this community, right here, right now. Humans evolved to live in groups; the isolated way many people live now, with no connections outside the nuclear family, that's not the norm for humans. We must gather and work together, to dream together of the better world that is possible, to start bringing that world into reality. We must create a self-sustaining community for our children to grow into.

This has already started happening, and that is one reason for hope. I see several reasons for hope. The community pushback to the ICE raids. People picking up new skills. There's more of us than there are of them, and their policies are very unpopular. Mutual aid orgs are popping up, like the communities in LA who are collecting funds to buy out street vendors so they can go home and be safe. People are banding together and pushing back. The fact that you are reading this right now, that is my reason for hope.

What appeals to people about MAGA is the sense of belonging they feel, no matter how ersatz

that may be. But deradicalization is possible. (see [LeavingMaga.com](http://LeavingMaga.com) and [LifeAfterHate.org](http://LifeAfterHate.org)). The fact that these groups and others like them exist, is another reason for hope. This will take a lot of patience and grace, of course. The deradicalization project is not for everyone; some people have been too traumatized by contact with the far right. I myself feel called to de-rad work, perhaps you do too.

We need to reach out to those who are suffering alone and bring them into our community. Provide a place for families to gather with like-minded others. People are notoriously difficult to organize, but we must keep trying. We must build relationships, prepare, learn new skills and practice, gather together, support one another, and learn together; grow together and form a network. Change is coming. The old world is dying; the new world struggles to be born. What kind of world do you want it to be? Let's make it happen. Together, we can do anything! Join us!

With faith in a better world,  
Lucy Nightshade

**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."**

—Margaret Mead

★ GET CONNECTED W/  
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together!

• your skills here!

⑥





## Notes on Stoic Virtue in Politics

by Kurt Rauh

To be politically engaged one must have **courage**. This requires speaking out against injustice, defending unpopular positions, and confronting powerful figures. Epictetus wrote:

"Men are disturbed not by the things which happen, but by the opinions about the things: for example, death is nothing terrible, for if it were, it would have seemed so to Socrates; for the opinion about death, that it is terrible, is the terrible thing. When then are we impeded or disturbed or grieved, let us never blame others, but ourselves, that is, our opinions. It is the act of an ill-instructed man to blame others for his own bad condition; it is the act of one who has begun to be instructed, to lay the blame on himself; and of one whose instruction is completed, neither to blame another, nor himself."

- Speak with confidence. Use only facts and evidence in a debate. Accept criticism of your positions and respond calmly and thoughtfully.
- Stick to your guns. Accept the things you cannot control, especially other people's opinions.
- Avoid cognitive dissonance. Avoid emotional outbursts when confronted with opposing attitudes, beliefs and opinions.

With courageous civic engagement one must act with truth and justice, rather than aggression, fear or recklessness.

Stoics claim **justice** is the highest virtue. For Marcus Aurelius, nothing was more important justice. Cicero, too, argued that justice was the source of all the other virtues. And neither of them was thinking of legal justice. Justice is wider than that. It was about how to act well in relation to other people; the interactions, and the obligations of being a social animal. Stoic Justice comes from the Greek term "dikaiosyne" (δικαιοσύνη), which is often

translated into English with the word "righteousness". The Stoics understood justice not simply as a noun, but also as a verb. Not something we get, but something we do.

In *On Duties* Cicero calls justice "the crowning glory of the virtues," "on the basis of which men are called 'good men,'" and he points out that justice is very similar to "charity, which may also be called kindness or generosity."

- Promote social justice. We should advocate for the common good rather than personal rewards.
- Listen to others who have different opinions by avoiding anger, argumentation and cognitive dissonance.

Engaging in politics without justice leads to corruption, partisanship, and self-interest. Justice in civic engagement is not about winning arguments but about contributing to a fair and rational society.

We can see from these writings that Stoics aren't cynical or without emotion. The Stoics didn't mean we should lack emotion; only that we should *manage* our emotions in productive ways. They enjoy pleasures and luxuries. But they won't sacrifice happiness or their character to acquire them. Stoics see how money, goods, power, and prestige can lead us into dark places. If a lack of some luxury causes negative emotion, Stoics "put it in its place," and see it for what it really is. Learning is the key; acquire education as learning, not a fancy college degree, but rather become someone with knowledge by working hard to acquire it. Cicero writes:

"Again, we must keep ourselves free from every disturbing emotion, not only from desire and fear, but also from excessive pain and pleasure, and from anger, so that we may enjoy that calm of soul and freedom from care which bring both moral stability and dignity of character."

- Think before responding. Daniel Kahneman (1924-2024), psychologist and winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, in his book *Thinking Fast and Slow* describes two systems in the brain. System 1 is fast thinking, intuitive and emotional. System 2 is slow, more deliberate and uses logic and reason. Try to lean on System 2.
- Divorce yourself from outcomes of arguments. Focus on doing what is best, rather than winning or losing.
- Evaluate the things that trigger you. In his letter writing to Lucillius, Seneca writes:



"There are more things, Lucilius, likely to frighten us than there are to crush us; we suffer more often in imagination than in reality....Accordingly, some things torment us more than they ought; some torment us before they ought; and some torment us when they ought not to torment us at all. We are in the habit of exaggerating, or imagining, or anticipating, sorrow."

Stoic civic engagement is about bringing wisdom, courage, justice, and temperance into political life. In a world where politics often seems driven by division and outrage, Stoicism offers a path of rational, ethical participation. The Stoic philosopher Gaius Musonius Rufus (20-30 CE - 101 CE) wrote:

"Virtue is not simply theoretical knowledge, but it is practical application as well... So a man who wishes to become good not only must be thoroughly familiar with the precepts which are conducive to virtue but must also be earnest and zealous in applying these principles." This essentially means that we have to apply ourselves to understanding how to be virtuous as well as apply ourselves to acting in those ways.

On the same note, Marcus Aurelius wrote to remind himself the following: "No longer talk at all about the kind of man that a good man ought to be, but be such."

Finally, the concept of freedom is a cornerstone of modern American thought, deeply intertwined with notions of individual autonomy, self-determination, and the ability to make choices. We celebrate the freedom to choose, in all areas of life: politics, education, career, friendship, sex, romance, parenting, religious observance, and even our identities. Slavoj Žižek, a Slovene philosopher and cultural theorist whose works address themes in psychoanalysis, politics, and popular culture, relentlessly challenges this seemingly self-evident truth, arguing that the freedom we believe we possess is often an illusion, a sophisticated form of control masked as liberation.

A critical analysis of freedom challenges our deeply held assumptions about individual autonomy and self-determination. This is not simply a nihilistic rejection of freedom. It is an invitation to rethink the very concept of freedom, to move beyond the superficial choices and to strive for a more profound and meaningful liberation.

Ultimately, true freedom lies not in the absence of constraints, but in the ability to recognize and

confront the constraints that shape our desires and limit our possibilities. It is a process of constant struggle, a perpetual questioning of the status quo, and a willingness to embrace the inherent paradox of freedom: that we are most free when we acknowledge our unfreedom and commit ourselves to the ongoing project of emancipation. To be truly free, we must first acknowledge that we are not. True freedom isn't about doing whatever you want, whenever you want. It's about breaking free from the things that hold you back—your conditioning, your fears, and your limiting beliefs. It's about living with clarity, peace, and an open mind. When you free yourself from these inner conditions, you can live in a way that's authentic and true to who you really are. True freedom is not found in external circumstances but in the freedom of the mind. And when you start to experience that freedom, life becomes something truly extraordinary.

## GET INVOLVED IN LOCAL POLITICS!!

- Myrtle Point City Council  
↳ Mon, 7/21, 6:30p, City Hall
- North Bend City Council  
↳ Tues, 7/22, 7:00p, City Hall
- Bandon City Council  
↳ Mon, 8/4, 7:00p, Bandon City Offices
- Coquille City Council  
↳ Mon 8/4, 7:00p, City Hall (new)
- Coos Bay City Council  
↳ Tues, 8/5, 6:00p, City Hall
- Coos County Board of Commissioners Meeting  
↳ Tues, 8/5, 9:30a, 225 N Adams St, Coquille



## Vote With Your Dollar

by Darlene Martin

Conservatives like to throw around the term "cancel culture" in a derogatory manner. They use it as a weapon upon anyone who doesn't agree with them or catches them in a lie.

We, the people, have used boycotts for centuries as protests against governments, companies, and people who did not treat us fairly. We don't buy items from companies that pollute. We walk off the job when profits soar, but wages do not go up. We rally to make our voices heard.

It may be difficult for the average working man or woman to get involved with outside groups. They are busy and exhausted trying to keep employment, pay the bills, raise a family, and find stability.

We may not have the financial or political power to make a newsworthy splash, but we can spend our money at local stores that operate the right way. We can withhold our dollars from businesses that over charge. We can call our local politicians and complain about price gouging.

The "trickle-down effect" rarely works. Corporations are legally required to make money for their stockholders. Email or call your congressman and ask them to raise taxes on corporations. Taxing profits helps discourage predatory pricing and profiteering because large corporations will have to send a greater share of their bonus money to the IRS.

Each of us can have an effect in small, meaningful ways. Many individuals, together, are a powerful influence.

[YOUR TWO CENTS  
HERE: WRITE TO US!  
coos.dialogue@gmail.com]

"IF EVER A TIME  
SHOULD COME WHEN  
VAIN AND ASPIRING  
MEN SHALL POSSESS  
THE HIGHEST SEATS  
IN GOVERNMENT,  
OUR COUNTRY WILL  
STAND IN NEED OF  
ITS EXPERIENCED  
PATRIOTS TO PREVENT  
ITS RUIN." — SAMUEL  
ADAMS



training sessions  
w/ a USCCA  
certified instr-  
-uctor: FREE for  
new shooters!



Excerpt from Gene Sharp's "*From Dictatorship to Democracy*:" the Weaknesses of Dictatorships

1. The cooperation of a multitude of people, groups, and institutions needed to operate the system may be restricted or withdrawn.
2. The requirements and effects of the regime's past policies will somewhat limit its present ability to adopt and implement conflicting policies.
3. The system may become routine in its operation, less able to adjust quickly to new situations.
4. Personnel and resources already allocated for existing tasks will not be easily available for new needs.
5. Subordinates fearful of displeasing their superiors may not report accurate or complete information needed by the dictators to make decisions.
6. The ideology may erode, and myths and symbols of the system may become unstable.
7. If a strong ideology is present that influences one's view of reality, firm adherence to it may cause inattention to actual conditions and needs.
8. Deteriorating efficiency and competency of the bureaucracy, or excessive controls and regulations, may make the system's policies and operation ineffective.
9. Internal institutional conflicts and personal rivalries and hostilities may harm, and even disrupt, the operation of the dictatorship.
10. Intellectuals and students may become restless in response to conditions, restrictions, doctrinalism, and repression.
11. The general public may over time become apathetic, skeptical, and even hostile to the regime.
12. Regional, class, cultural, or national differences may become acute.
13. The power hierarchy of the dictatorship is always unstable to some degree, and at times extremely so. Individuals do not only remain in the same position in the ranking, but may rise or fall to other ranks or be removed entirely and replaced by new persons.
14. Sections of the police or military forces may act to achieve their own objectives, even against the will of established dictators, including by coup d'état.
15. If the dictatorship is new, time is required for it to become well established.
16. With so many decisions made by so few people in the dictatorship, mistakes of judgment, policy, and action are likely to occur.
17. If the regime seeks to avoid these dangers and decentralizes controls and decision making, its control over the central levers of power may be further eroded.

Rally with us —

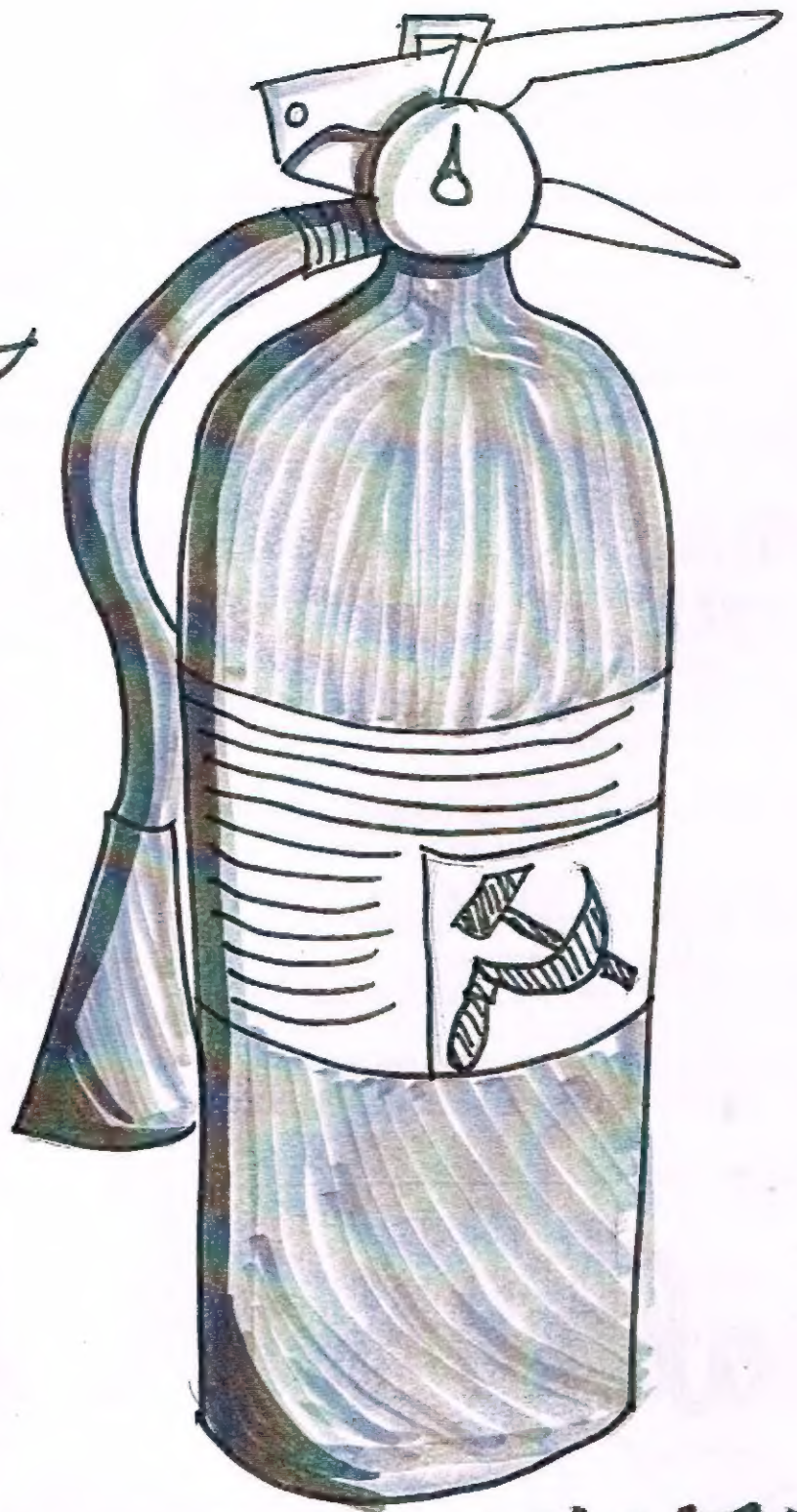
Saturday, July 19th, 12p-2p @

the Coos Bay Boardwalk.

DEMONSTRATE!

professional  
conduct  
is  
MANDATORY





FIGHT POLARIZATION  
SPEAK. WRITE. READ.